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October 17, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. DONALD P. GREGG
Assistant to the Vice President
for National Security Affairs

Executive Registry

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Office of Management and Budget
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Central Intelligence Agency

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MS. JACKIE TILLMAN
Executive Assistant to United States
Representative to the United Nations
Department of StateBRIG GENERAL GEORGE A. JOULWAN
Executive Assistant to the Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff**SUBJECT:** NSPG Meeting (Lebanon and the Middle East) (S)

The subject meeting will be held in the White House Situation Room at 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon, Tuesday, October 18, 1983. An agenda is attached. Also attached is a draft strategy paper prepared by the Department of State; it is proposed as a basis for discussion at the meeting. (U)

Robert M. Kimmitt
Robert M. Kimmitt
Executive Secretary**B-223D****Attachment**Tab A = Agenda
Tab B = State Strategy PaperDistribution by
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A

SECRET**SECRET****SYSTEM II
91209****NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING GROUP MEETING****Tuesday, October 18, 1983****White House Situation Room****11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon****AGENDA**

- I. Introduction. Bud McFarlane**
- II. Decisions regarding Next Steps
in Lebanon. George P. Shultz**
 - A. Within Lebanon**
 - 1. Maintaining the balance of forces in Lebanon: The level and character of U.S. presence/activities
 - 2. Approach to Lebanese factions currently outside the Lebanese Government
 - 3. Approach to the Israelis concerning their role in Lebanon
 - 4. Accelerating the pace of foreign withdrawals
 - B. The Broader Dimensions**
 - 1. Exploiting turmoil in the PLO and approaches to King Hussein
 - 2. Approach to the GOI on Israeli policies for the West Bank
 - 3. Containing risks and exploiting opportunities in the Iran-Iraq War
 - 4. Near-term measures to strengthen Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia
 - 5. Enhancing U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation
- III. Discussion All**
- IV. Summary. Bud McFarlane**

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B

SECRET/SENSITIVE**OUR STRATEGY IN LEBANON AND THE MIDDLE EAST:****OPERATIONAL ISSUES****I. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY**

Our principal objectives in the Middle East at present are: First, we want to ensure the emergence of a stable, friendly, broadly-based Lebanese government with which we can work to extend its authority throughout the country, aiming at the ultimate withdrawal of all foreign forces -- including the MNF. Second, we want to shape the conditions that will eventually make possible a Jordanian-Israeli negotiation in accordance with your September 1 initiative. Of course, these efforts take place within the framework of other broad objectives: to help assure the security of Israel, to protect the Western world's vital oil supply lines, to maintain American preeminence in Middle East peace diplomacy, to bolster our moderate Arab friends, and to reduce the Soviet role in the area.

These objectives are interrelated. Specifically, a satisfactory outcome in Lebanon will help us in the broader dimension of Middle East diplomacy. Conversely, an American humiliation in Lebanon will weaken our position generally in the Middle East.

A. Within Lebanon

Within Lebanon, our objective of strengthening the Government of Lebanon (GOL) requires a strategy with several elements. We must maintain the balance of forces that helped us achieve the ceasefire: e.g., the LAF, the MNF, and our offshore naval presence. The United States must play an active role behind the scenes in the reconciliation talks both to foster accommodation and to counterbalance Syrian pressures. We need a greater and more active exertion of Israeli leverage over key factions as an additional counterweight to Syrian influence. We must help and urge Gemayel to broaden his base and strengthen his position by reaching political accommodation with key groups such as the Shia and the Druze, thus splitting

SECRET/SENSITIVE
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- 2 -

the opposition and weakening Syria's grip on the country. More specifically:

1. We should maintain our forces in Beirut and offshore. Our MNP contingent and supporting naval presence should be maintained as a backstop to the GOL during the difficult reconciliation negotiations and as insurance against periodic breakdowns in the ceasefire and renewed pressures from Syria or its surrogates. We must consider whether further decisions are now necessary to protect American forces against attacks from strategic points in the security perimeter around Beirut.
2. We should encourage Gemayel to appeal to the Shia leadership to join and support the Central Government. Recognizing the pivotal importance of Nabih Berri and the demographic weight of the Shia community in Beirut and southern Lebanon, we must find ways to increase their willingness to support the government.
3. We should seek to weaken Jumblatt's ties to Syria. With their defeat of the Lebanese Forces in Alayh and the Shouf, the Druze have now realized most of their security objectives. We and Gemayel should exploit the fact that the Druze seem uncomfortable with the continued presence of armed external forces and are in desperate need of economic assistance for reconstruction.
4. We should urge Israel to use constructively its leverage with key factions. Pending the complete withdrawal of the IDF and the disbanding of heavily armed militias, Israel can play a crucial role in support of the GOL by controlling the logistics of certain militias and by exercising its considerable influence with certain communities to encourage accommodation with the GOL. We need to discourage Israel's tendency to undercut the GOL by encouraging exponents of partition.
5. We should continue to pursue the objective of withdrawal of all foreign forces. Under appropriate conditions, the further Israeli turnover of territory to the LAF can be a means of strengthening Gemayel, facilitating his efforts to coopt the Shia and the Druze, and assuring the security of Israel's northern border. We should defend the May 17 agreement as the only existing formula for ensuring both Israeli withdrawal and Israeli security, but we should

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 3 -

understand Gemayel's need for tactical flexibility with respect to its implementation.

6. We must keep Saudi Arabia actively engaged in the process of securing national reconciliation and the withdrawal of all foreign forces.

B. The Broader Dimension

In the broader dimension of our Middle East strategy, a pivotal element is our relationship with Israel. There are basic areas of disagreement and basic areas of common interest and collaboration. For the last several months, Israel has seemed to be going through an unprecedented period of war-weariness and demoralization, now compounded by economic and political crisis. While Israel has not eased its policies toward the occupied territories, its apparent lack of assertiveness in Lebanon has undermined the balance of forces there and emboldened the Syrians. Our objective should be to reinvigorate our relationship with Israel with a view to enlisting more support for our broader goals in the Middle East.

This is related to a second key objective, which is to isolate Syria and thwart its disruptive actions, as long as Syria -- with Soviet backing -- pursues policies counter to our goals. Syrian ascendancy in the Arab world weakens the moderate Arabs who are our friends; it also intimidates those moderate Arabs and Palestinians who would otherwise join the peace process. Our dialogue with Syria should be maintained as a useful channel of communication. However, our strategy must be to accumulate all possible counterweights to Syria to block its gains and set limits to its ambitions, even while we keep the door open to constructive solutions.

Thus:

1. We must energize the US-Israeli strategic dialogue. NSDD-99 recognized that US-Israeli cooperation was an important means of countering the Soviet/Syrian bid for dominance in the Middle East. The apparent demoralization of Israel now threatens to remove a key counterweight to Syria. There is an urgent need for candid discussions with the Israelis at a high level on basic questions of strategy, not only for Lebanon but the Middle East in general. There is a need to bolster both Israeli self-confidence and mutual confidence, restoring an intimate strategic dialogue which will cover some things we want from Israel as well as things Israel wants from us. It is time to consider new or strengthened steps in military cooperation, possible emergency economic

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 4 -

assistance in the current economic crisis (should Israel so request), and enhanced political cooperation in Third World areas outside the Middle East. At the same time, we want to see Israeli flexibility with respect to withdrawals from Lebanon, policies in the West Bank and Gaza, and our efforts to strengthen and cooperate with the moderate Arab states (e.g., the Jordan Logistics Planning program).

2. We must continue our pursuit of the peace process. We must keep the September 1 initiative on the table and look for opportunities to shape the conditions that will make progress possible. The turmoil within the PLO, and the Syrian assault on Arafat, could have far-reaching consequences which we might be able to exploit. We must continue to show our concern for the fate of the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza.

3. We must reexamine our strategy toward the Iran-Iraq War. The war poses risks that must be contained and also possible opportunities to be exploited. Our objectives should be to ensure that plans are available to cope with any Iranian disruption of oil traffic through the Gulf, to find ways of preventing the balance of power from tilting against Iraq, and to respond to requests from the Gulf states for assistance against threats from Iran. At the same time there may be opportunities to isolate Syria and Libya in the Arab world in their capacity as supporters of Iran.

4. We must bolster our moderate friends, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, as another counterweight to Syria. We must encourage the reentry of Egypt to a position of leadership in the Arab world. We should not allow Israeli opposition to deter us from proceeding vigorously with the JLP program and other security assistance in order to strengthen King Hussein and Jordan -- the country that is the key to the peace process as well as a country under Syrian pressure.

II. OPERATIONAL DECISIONS

A. Within Lebanon,

1. To maintain the balance of forces in Lebanon and in the greater Beirut area, we should:

-- continue our present force commitment to the MNP in Greater Beirut,

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 5 -

-- maintain a credible off-shore naval presence to support the MTF,

-- keep our MTF partners engaged in the common effort, and

-- define the security perimeter around Beirut and consider whether further decisions may now be necessary to protect American forces against attacks from Suq al-Gharb and other strategic points.

2. To enhance the GOL appeal to Nabih Berri and the Shia community, we should:

-- encourage Berri and other Shia leaders to participate in an extension of Lebanese civil authority south of the Awwali line (accepting earlier Israeli offers),

-- facilitate the relocation of the Phalangist Lebanese forces from barracks and strongholds in southern Lebanon,

-- encourage prompt Saudi assistance in the reconstruction of southern Lebanon along the lines proposed for the Shouf, and

-- encourage Gemayel to give adequate weight to prominent Shia leaders in a government of national unity.

3. To weaken Junblatt's dependence on Syria, we should:

-- encourage more direct and frequent discussions with other local Druze leaders on conditions concerning their communities,

-- encourage the disbursement of US (and Saudi) reconstruction aid to the Druze and Shia communities through the central government (but earmarked for these communities).

4. To derive maximum benefit from Israeli leverage in Lebanon, we should:

-- strive to coordinate our efforts with a view to channeling Israeli influence with the Druze and Christians, where it is most useful (e.g., getting the LF out of the South),

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 6 -

-- encourage the Israelis to continue establishing and enforcing "red lines" against the infiltration and activities of external elements.

5. To advance the goal of withdrawal of all foreign forces, we should:

-- encourage Israel and the GOL to devise alternative and interim security arrangements to permit further Israeli withdrawals, and

-- continue to defend the May 17 agreement in discussions in both Damascus and Beirut as well as in our public statements.

B. The Broader Dimension.

1. To broaden and deepen US-Israeli strategic cooperation and to bolster Israeli willingness to assert a constructive influence in the region, we should:

-- accelerate military cooperation with Israel with a view to providing a proposed program to the Department of State by a date certain, as required by NSDD-99,

-- authorize a mission to conduct a wide-ranging strategic dialogue with the Israeli leadership on the underlying importance of a common strategy for Lebanon and the Middle East with special focus on the Soviet-Syrian threat,

-- schedule a visit to Israel by General Vessey soon afterwards to begin discussions with the Israelis on joint planning for major contingencies involving the Soviet Union, as per NSDD-99,

-- give favorable consideration to outstanding Israeli requests related to FMS, transfer of production technology, renegotiation of the 1979 MOA on defense cooperation and procurement, and intensified sharing of military technology and intelligence, particularly with respect to Soviet weaponry and military activities in Syria,

-- be prepared to continue our dialogue with the GOI on the Israeli economy, including the possibility of USG financial assistance in the context of an effective GOI economic stabilization effort, and

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 7 -

-- make clear that we find Israeli opposition to the JLP unacceptable and are concerned about Israeli policies on the West Bank and Gaza.

2. To advance the prospects for the peace process, we should:

-- seek ways of exploiting the current turmoil in the PLO (e.g., encourage King Hussein to challenge the legitimacy of the PLO so that he can come forward, together with appropriate West Bankers and Gazans, as a peace negotiator; or alternatively, consider means of encouraging Arafat to resume his dialogue with Hussein),

-- restate in stronger terms our opposition to Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank and Gaza, and

-- pursue our program of urging the Israelis to improve the prospects for economic development and the flexibility of administrative procedures to improve the quality of life for Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza.

3. To contain the risks and exploit the opportunities of the Iran-Iraq war, we should:

-- continue our efforts for a UN Security Council resolution, acceptable to both sides, exempting oil facilities from attack,

-- develop a scenario for diplomatic action in case of a dangerous escalation of the war, in coordination with our allies and our friends in the region,

-- assess the probable economic effects of possible interference with the flow of oil through the Gulf and determine criteria for activating a US military response,

-- assess the requirements for naval and other military capabilities in the area in order to be prepared to safeguard the vital international waterways of the Gulf,

-- reconsider our unwillingness to approve the transfer by Italy to Iraq of frigates containing US-made component,

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 8 -

-- take further steps with Israel and Korea to halt the flow of US-made arms to Iran, and reinforce controls on the direct sale to Iran of US equipment of military value,

-- continue to use our influence with third countries to discourage the supply of critical equipment to Iran, and

-- in the event Iran instigates or threatens an oil crisis, use the opportunity to discredit Syria as a key supporter of Iran and demonstrate support of the Gulf Arabs.

4. To strengthen our moderate Arab friends in Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, we should:

-- urge the Arab moderates to normalize relations with Egypt and recognize the importance of Egypt as a counterweight to Syria,

-- urge the Saudis to restore economic ties and economic aid to Egypt,

-- work to ensure the passage of the Jordan Logistics Planning program,

-- help strengthen the Jordanian Army against Syria, and

-- work to maintain the commitment of Egypt and Israel to their peace treaty and help them to resolve outstanding differences.

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Executive Assistant to United States
Representative to the United Nations
Department of State**D**BRIG GENERAL GEORGE A. JOULWAN
Executive Assistant to the Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

REMARKS:

BMR. CHARLES HILL
Executive Secretary
Department of State**D**COLONEL (P) JOHN H. STANFORD
Executive Secretary
Department of Defense